

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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TAGS: EGEN, FAO

SUBJECT: DIRECTOR- GENERAL' S PROPOSALS ON INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO
ASSURE BASIC FOOD STOCKS

BEGIN SUMMARY: FAO DG IS PRESENTING TO JUNE '73 FAO COUNCIL
PROPOSAL TO ENSURE WORLD SECURITY AGAINST FOOD SHORTAGES.
PROPOSAL SUGGESTS MINIMUM LEVEL FOOD SECURITY COULD BE ACHIEVED
THROUGH SOME COORDINATION NATIONAL STOCK POLICIES, AND CALLS FOR
CONSENSUS ON CONCEPT. ALSO CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES IN ESTABLISHING BASIC FOOD STOCKS WHERE REQUIRED AND
REPORTS CONSULTATIONS HELD WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES.
DG, AFTER COUNCIL, PLANS PREPARE DETAILED FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD
SECURITY POLICIES TO BE DISCUSSED IN NOVEMBER '73 FAO CONFERENCE.
END SUMMARY.

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1. FAO COUNCIL DOCUMENT 60/11 WHICH WE ARE FORWARDING TODAY, CONTAINS FAO DG'S PROPOSAL ON INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO ASSURE WORLD FOOD SUPPLY STOCKS. NOTING THAT DANGER OF SCARCITY HAS EMERGED BECAUSE THERE IS NO ACCEPTANCE BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF CONCEPT OF MINIMUM SAFE LEVEL OF BASIC FOOD STOCKS FOR THE WORLD AND NOTING THAT SITUATION REMAINED MANAGEABLE IN PAST WHEN WORLD COULD RELY ON SURPLUS STOCKS IN NORTH AMERICA, DG STATES THESE STOCKS NOW DISAPPEARED AND ANY RE- EMERGENCE LIKELY TO BE TEMPORARY. HE ALSO STATES THAT HE IS CONVINCED THERE IS WIDE RECOGNITION OF PROBLEM AND READINESS TO COOPERATE TO DEVELOP ACCEPTABLE CONCEPT OF MINIMUM WORLD FOOD SECURITY ON PART OF CONSUMING AND PRODUCING COUNTRIES BOTH DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING.

2. DG HAS PROPOSED GENERAL LINE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPT OF MINIMUM LEVEL WORLD FOOD SECURITY. BASIC TO THIS WOULD BE DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES RECOGNITION COMMON RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSURE, THROUGH NATIONAL STOCK HOLDINGS, AVAILABILITY OF SUFFICIENT WORLD SUPPLIES TO AVOID ACUTE SHORTAGES. IF THIS CONCEPT ACCEPTED, REGULAR CONSULTATIONS WOULD BE HELD IN AN APPROPRIATE INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODY TO REVIEW STOCK POSITION AND TO ENABLE GOVERNMENTS MAKE COLLECTIVE JUDGMENT AS TO WHETHER SUPPLIES ADEQUATE TO MEET MINIMUM NEED. DG HAS OFFERED PROVIDE REPORTS AND ANALYSIS TO FACILITATE CONSULTATIONS.

3. DG BELIEVES CONCERTED NATIONAL STOCK POLICIES WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVE AND PROPOSES CONCEPT OF VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES WHICH SHOULD BE FORMULATED FOR NATIONAL FOOD GRAIN STOCK POLICIES IN EXPORTING AND IMPORTING COUNTRIES. HE FORESEES COUNTRIES ARRANGING FOR NATIONAL (CEREAL) STOCK IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMMON GUIDELINES BUT ADAPTED TO OWN CIRCUMSTANCES.

4. DG SUGGESTS INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM TO BE DRAWN UP TO ASSIST VULNERABLE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHO WISH TO MAINTAIN MINIMUM NATIONAL FOOD STOCKS.

5. DG SUGGESTS THAT IN PRINCIPLE, DESIRABLE FOR ARRANGEMENT TO ENSURE PARTICIPATING IMPORTING COUNTRIES OBTAIN PRIORITY IN RECEIVING SUPPLIES FROM EXPORTING COUNTRIES IN TIMES SERIOUS SHORTAGE. ALSO SUGGESTS ANY COMMITMENT BY GOVERNMENTS MIGHT BE CONSIDERED IN CONTEXT OF RENEGOTIATION OF INTERNATIONAL WHEAT AGREEMENT.

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6. DG STATES HE HAS CONSULTED IBRD, IMF, UN, UNCTAD, UNDP, WFP. REPORTS THAT DISCUSSIONS IDENTIFIED NUMBER OF ASPECTS IN WHICH INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES COULD PLAY LARGE ROLE IN ASSISTING INTERESTED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES IN GENERAL INDICATED IF POLICY SUPPORT FORTHCOMING FROM GOVERNMENTS, IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR AGENCIES TO EXPLORE TOGETHER SOME TECHNICAL

ISSUES IN GREATER DEPTH. VOLPE

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